

AMERICA DOES BEST WHEN WE STICK TO OUR BASIC VALUES OF PEACE AND JUSTICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, for many years I have been calling upon our Nation's leaders to reject war as an instrument of foreign policy and to emphasize diplomacy. Today I rise to praise the Obama administration for opening a new page in our relations with the world by showing that it is ready to talk with friends and foes alike.

In just a short time, the administration has taken a number of important steps. It has sent an envoy to Syria, a nation which must be part of a comprehensive solution to the conflicts in the Middle East. The administration has announced its willingness to work with China on such critical issues as the global economy, on energy, and the environment. President Obama is trying to get Russia's help in convincing the Iranians to give up their ambitions of nuclear weapons, and they are encouraging our NATO partners to resume high-level relations with Russia. These relations, as we remember, were suspended after Russia's military operation against Georgia 6 months ago.

In the State Department, Secretary of State Clinton said that the United States will hold a high-level conference in Afghanistan, a conference to bring together the nations of the region and members of the international community for serious talks. Most importantly, Secretary Clinton has said that Iran is likely to be invited to this conference because, Mr. Speaker, we must talk to Iran if we're going to reduce tensions between our two countries.

President Obama promised to reach out to Iran during the presidential campaign even though he took a lot of political heat during that time. Now the President is making good on his pledge, and I, for one, applaud him for that. Of course, there are some who oppose these diplomatic overtures.

America's 6-year occupation of Iraq, Mr. Speaker, has weakened the ability of our Armed Forces to respond to real threats elsewhere in the world, and our occupation of Afghanistan hasn't defeated the Taliban. So now we must protect against sinking even deeper into an endless conflict in that part of the world.

Those who think that diplomacy won't work should read the article in today's Washington Post by Fareed Zakaria. He says the following: "The Washington establishment treats compromise as treason and negotiations as appeasement. It believes that the only way to deal with other countries is by issuing a series of demands. This is not foreign policy," he says. "It's imperial policy. And it isn't likely to work in today's world."

Mr. Speaker, I agree with him on that because I think it's exactly right.

If we are going to achieve our foreign policy goals, we must use all the tools of soft power, which really should be called "smart power," because these tools include diplomacy, humanitarian assistance, and conflict resolution.

Mr. Speaker, America does best when we stick to our basic values of peace and justice. These values are the real source of our strength, and they are the values that will help us build a world that's peaceful and safe.

HONORING DAVE LAWRENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to honor a great constituent of my congressional district, Mr. Dave Lawrence of South Florida, for his upcoming recognition as the American Red Cross 2009 Humanitarian of the Year.

In order to be named Humanitarian of the Year, Mr. Speaker, the International Red Cross requires that a person possess these qualities: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, and unity. Well, anyone who has spent even just a moment with Dave Lawrence can see that he embodies these very qualities. He brings them into every activity of his life and every endeavor that he pursues.

Mr. Lawrence is a graduate of the University of Florida, where his many distinguished academic accomplishments earned him the title of "Outstanding Journalism Graduate." Mr. Lawrence's subsequent career in journalism would take him across our country from a position as editor of the Charlotte Observer to Detroit, where he served as the publisher and executive editor of The Free Press.

In 1989, to our community's great fortune, he settled down in South Florida, where he was the publisher for the Miami Herald for 10 successful years. As a journalist, Dave Lawrence was honored with the First Amendment Award from the Scripps Howard Foundation and the IAPA Commentary Award for the elegance of his writing. Under his leadership the Miami Herald brought home five Pulitzer Prizes in a decade.

In 1999 Mr. Lawrence retired from journalism to pursue another passion. Leaving his distinguished career as a journalist behind him, Dave's altruism would rival even those individuals of the many philanthropic organizations that he has led, such as the United Way and the University of Florida Foundation. This calling was one for which he had already proven himself quite adept with his own five children.

South Florida's Father's Day Council recognized him as their Father of the Year, and the Family Counseling Services honored him; his wife, Roberta; his three daughters; and his two sons with the title "Family of the Year."

Dave's calling was to prepare as many children as possible for their education at the earliest possible opportunity. His crusade gathered steam when he led the voters of Miami-Dade County to authorize The Children's Trust, which provides an independent source of revenue devoted solely to the children of South Florida. His success in this campaign earned him two prestigious appointments by Governor Jeb Bush.

As the Chair of both the Florida Partnership for Childhood Readiness and the Blue Ribbon Panel on Child Protection, Dave Lawrence served as the steward of the early education program for Florida's children. From these positions he was able to play a crucial role in the fight to amend the constitution of our great State of Florida. Now, thanks in large part to his efforts, all of the children of our great State of Florida have access to quality pre-kindergarten education so that they may have a proper foundation for learning that will serve them for the rest of their lives.

Dave Lawrence, I hope that you know how great you have been to our children, to our South Florida community, and, indeed, to our Nation.

The global economy will continue to grow, and yet our world will become smaller, and the competition in it will be even more fierce. But thanks to the philanthropic efforts of Mr. David Lawrence, the children of Florida will have the head start that they need to stay competitive and ensure that America remains the greatest democratic country in the history of the world.

Dave, we owe you a debt of gratitude, and no one deserves to be honored by the American Red Cross 2009 Humanitarian of the Year award more than you.

Felicidades, mi amigo. Congratulations, my friend.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CRIME BY FOREIGN NATIONALS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the crime committed in the United States by foreign nationals is hard to determine. The statistics are all over the map. But let me give you some tonight.

The 9/11 Families For a Secure America say that 32 percent of all people incarcerated in the United States are in the United States illegally.

Recently, I had the opportunity to go to south Texas to visit some of our sheriffs on the Texas-Mexico border. There are 16 counties in Texas that